

from our shoulders ; they were a gift and a triumph . . . We may reach our promised land ; but it is far behind us in the Wilderness, in the early time of struggle, that we have our Sinais and our personal talk with God in the Bush."

After the death of his second little girl, he writes these touching and wise lines to a friend :—

"But enough, dear Sydney, of death and sorrow. They are not subjects which I think it profitable or wise to talk about, think about, or write about often. Death is a private tutor. We have no fellow-scholars, and must lay our lessons to heart alone."

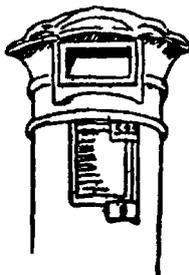
But the man who wrote this confesses merrily to another friend, that though he was "with God against evolution," he did hate going to church ; but when staying away, he always sent "an oblation to the offertory."

To Mrs. — he writes :—

"I am often struck with the fact that people of a sceptical turn, and who look upon all traditional faiths as broken reeds, are sure to lay hold of some private bulrush of credulity, and fancy it an oak. For myself, I look upon a belief as being none the worse, but rather the better, for being hereditary, prizing as I do whatever helps to give continuity to the being and doing of man, and an accumulative force to his character."

These are the words of a wise man ! Before leaving these letters we cannot refrain from adding another quotation for the benefit of those of our readers who may not, perhaps, have the time to spare to read these rather lengthy volumes :—

"I take great comfort in God. I think He is considerably amused with us sometimes, but that He likes us on the whole, and would not let us get at the match-box so carelessly as He does, unless He knew that the frame of His Universe was fire-proof. How many times have I not seen the fire-engines of Church and State, clanging and lumbering along to put out—a false alarm ! And when the heavens are cloudy, what a glare can be cast by a burning shanty !"



Letters to the Editor.

(Notes, Queries, &c.)

Whilst cordially inviting communications upon all subjects for these columns, we wish it to be distinctly understood that we do not in ANY WAY hold ourselves responsible for the opinions expressed by our correspondents.

PROPOSED NEW ORDER OF MIDWIFERY PRACTITIONERS.

To the Editor of "the Nursing Record."

MADAM,—As several medical practitioners have asked me—"Is it a fact that the proposed new order of Midwifery Practitioners is to be absolutely independent of medical practitioners, and a separate and distinct class of practitioners?" I feel I cannot do better than quote the words of the supporters of this new order. Thus, the late Dr. J. H. Aveling, when giving evidence before the Select Committee on Midwives' Registration, said :—"Nurses and Midwives are two separate bodies, the midwife acts by herself on her own responsibility, the Nurse is the handmaid of the physician, and does what he tells her." Next, in the prospectus issued by the Midwives' Institute, a body which collected no less than £985 to push the Midwives' Bills through Parliament, the following occurs. "As some confusion exists in the public mind as to the

difference between midwives and monthly nurses, it may be well to state that a midwife, according to the Obstetrical Society's diploma, 'is qualified to attend all cases of natural labour,' that is, *she undertakes the cases herself without a doctor, and is, in fact, engaged instead of one.*" This is sufficiently plain. Again if reference is made to "Burdett's Hospital Annual," 1891, the following will be found :—"It behoves all midwives just now to be sure of obtaining a good certificate for the day of registration is at hand. The midwife stands almost half-way between the Nurse and the doctor, she takes on herself a great responsibility, and she requires most thorough and careful training in her duties. The Nurse acts under the doctor's orders, but the midwife is answerable to no one, and has to use her own judgment. Every reason which was brought forward for registration of medical men applies also to midwives ; upon their hands are the lives of hundreds of mothers and infants."

Surely these statements are sufficiently plain ; they have been made by the chief supporters of the proposed new order. They will also help to inform the General Medical Council as to the true meaning of this proposal.

It must be remembered that at the November Session, 1892, of the Medical Council, the following was adopted :—"That the President be requested by the General Medical Council to point out to the institutions and persons who grant such certificates, that the certificate should be expressed in such a form as not to lead to the impression that it is a legal qualification to practise midwifery." Again, at the May Session, 1893, of the Council, the President, Sir Richard Quain, said : "Attention was directed at the last meeting to the form of certificates granted by certain institutions, to women who had passed an examination in midwifery, which certificates may lead to the impression that they were legal qualifications. By direction of the Council, a notification was prepared and sent to some forty of these bodies, indicating the risk they incurred. Satisfactory answers have been received from several bodies, and no doubt the Council's action will be beneficial in preventing the confusion which is so objectionable." But, has the Council's action been "beneficial" so far? If reference be made to page 64 of the *British Medical Journal*, October 28th, 1893, the following advertisements relating to Queen Charlotte's Lying-in Hospital, occur :—"On completion of the period of training, each pupil, on being found competent, is awarded a Diploma, qualifying her to practise." Mark, she is given a "diploma," and it "qualifies her to practise." Next, in the same journal, and in connection with the General Lying-in Hospital, the advertisement states, that female pupils are "trained in midwifery." Now, I feel that the Medical Council should call the medical staffs of these hospitals before them and ask if they intend to hinder and thwart the above resolution of the Council. The example set by these practitioners acting in these hospitals is so degrading, that other persons are following their example ; and with the result that we have now "The Magnetic and Botanic School of Safe Medicine, Limited," registered as a company, and which examines and grants a diploma qualifying the holder to practise medicine, surgery, and midwifery. Surely those who grant diplomas to midwives cannot feel satisfied at this down-grade imitation. The question is—will the General Medical Council allow this debasing state of affairs to go on? With them it rests, for they have the power of making it "infamous conduct," and striking off the Medical Register the names of those who go on trafficking in the sale of these midwifery diplomas.

As an attempt has been made to make a point out of the fact that midwives are employed by the Irish Poor Law, I would draw attention to the important circular issued by the Irish Poor Law Commissioners, and dated August 2nd, 1846. It refers to the "certain evils" which followed the manner in which midwives were employed in

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